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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 51st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TSHERING (Bhutan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS (continued) (A/C.3/50/L.39)

(b) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (continued) (A/C.3/50/L.32, L.33, L.34, L.36, L.38, L.40 and L.42)

(c) HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES (continued) (A/C.3/50/L.43)

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.32: Respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes

1. Mr. FERNANDEZ PALACIOS (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution, said the main import of the text was that there was no single political system or single model for electoral processes equally suited to all countries and, accordingly, all peoples had the right freely to determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and to decide for themselves the methods to be applied and the institutions to be established.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.33: United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education: culture of peace

2. Mr. GUILLÉN (Peru), introducing the draft resolution, said that the sponsors wished not only to emphasize the convergence between the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education and the transdisciplinary project of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) entitled "Towards a Culture of Peace", particularly the unit "Education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance", but also to express their support for the UNESCO initiative and to provide the General Assembly with information which would be of benefit during its discussions on the Decade. The draft resolution had no budgetary implications.

3. The CHAIRMAN announced that South Africa, Belgium, Benin, Burundi, Chile, Gabon, Georgia, Guinea, Israel, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Monaco and Uruguay had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.34: Strengthening of United Nations action in the human rights field through the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity

4. Mrs. CUERGO (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution, announced that Lesotho had become a sponsor. She made a correction to the Spanish text. The draft resolution made clear that action in the human rights field must be based on full respect for the political, economic and social realities of each country and must be impartial and objective, without political ends.

5. Ms. MURUGESAN (India) announced that India wished to become a sponsor.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.36: Respect for the right to universal freedom of travel and vital importance of family reunification

6. Mrs. CUERGO (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution, said that, in paragraph 4, the words "against another State" had been deleted. The draft resolution dealt with an issue which had a humanitarian dimension and was of particular importance for Cuba.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.38: United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

7. Ms. de WET (Namibia), introducing the draft resolution, said the sponsors believed that teaching respect for human rights, in other words, the rights of all individuals without exception, in every sphere, was the best means of preventing political regimes from drifting towards authoritarianism and of promoting peace, democracy and social justice.

8. The CHAIRMAN announced that Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Guinea, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco and the Philippines had become sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.39: International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

9. Ms. MORGAN (Mexico) introduced the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.40: Situation of human rights in Cambodia

10. Mr. WILLIS (Australia), introducing the draft resolution, drew attention to two minor changes: in paragraph 6, the words "paragraph 4" should be replaced by "paragraphs 2 and 4"; and in paragraph 20, the words "for the office in Cambodia" should be replaced by "of the office in Cambodia".

11. The CHAIRMAN announced that the following countries wished to join the sponsors of the draft resolution: Belgium, France, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Spain and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.42: Strengthening of the rule of law

12. Mr. TELLES RIBERO (Brazil), introducing the draft resolution, said that Guatemala had joined the sponsors. The text was based on General Assembly resolution 49/194, with a few new provisions incorporated in the light of the Secretary-General's proposals contained in his report on strengthening the rule of law (A/50/653), including a provision on the need to mobilize additional resources for the Centre for Human Rights and, in particular, one relating to the Centre's programme of advisory services and technical assistance, which had a direct impact on the realization of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law.

Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.43: Situation of human rights in Kosovo

13. Mr. KULLA (Albania), introducing the draft resolution, said that the sponsors had been joined by Finland and Norway. In the fifth preambular paragraph, subparagraph (a), the phrase "former ethnic Albanian policemen" should be replaced by "ethnic Albanian former policemen". The proposed text would draw attention to the grave situation in Kosovo where large-scale violations of the rights of Albanians were being perpetrated.

AGENDA ITEM 107: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (A/C.3/50/L.24) (continued)

14. The CHAIRMAN said that draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.24, "Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas", had no budgetary implications and that the following countries had become sponsors: Azerbaijan, Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, El Salvador, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Russian Federation, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania and United States. Malawi was not one of the sponsors.

15. Ms. ENKHTSETSEG (Mongolia) announced that, following in-depth consultations, paragraph 2 (d) of the proposed text had been changed to reflect, more accurately the corresponding provision in the Beijing Platform for Action (para. 61 (b)). The new subparagraph should read: "Undertaking necessary measures to give rural women full and equal access to productive resources, including the rights to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit/capital, natural resources, appropriate technologies, markets and information and meeting their basic requirements in water and sanitation;". A drafting change had also been made to paragraph 4: after the "World Food Summit", the phrase "to be held" should be replaced by "which would be organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations".

16. Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.24 was adopted.

17. Mr. FERNÁNDEZ (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union after the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.24, recalled that it was understood that the reference to the right of women to inheritance (para. 2 (d) of the adopted text) was based on paragraphs 61 (b) and 274 (d) of the Beijing Platform for Action, which reflected a consensus.

18. Mrs. CHIGAGA (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the southern African States, said that she regretted not having been in a position to join the sponsors of the text which had just been adopted. The issue of improving the situation of women in rural areas was extremely important in her subregion, where the majority of women practised subsistence agriculture but played a crucial role in development in general and in food production in particular. For such women, access to the right to ownership of land was a priority since, without land as collateral, they had no access to credit and could not escape from poverty. Therefore, legislative and administrative reforms in that area should be undertaken as a matter of urgency, as called for in the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular paragraph 61 (b).

19. Mr. HAMIDA (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the implementation of paragraph 2 (d) of the draft resolution should respect the principles and provisions of the Shariah.

20. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan), speaking as coordinator of the working group on draft resolutions relating to action to be taken pursuant to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, said that, following intensive consultations which had been open to all delegations, the working group had prepared a draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly under agenda item 165 and another which would be placed before the Committee under agenda item 107. The draft resolution under agenda item 165 had already been submitted to the secretariat of the General Assembly, but interested delegations could still become sponsors. Given the broad consensus reached when the text was being prepared, the draft resolution under agenda item 107 could be presented as a document of the Chairman.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.